

AN 67
ELEGY
ON THE
DEATH
OF
MARTIN DRAYSON;

Who departed this Life,

SEPTEMBER 12, 1773: AGED 21 YEARS.

Containing some Account of his Conversion,
and religious Experience.

Thou——snatch'd the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench'd it in thy blood.

NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

SEVENOAKS;

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T H E

P R E F A C E.


 HIS little Piece was put into my Hands much in its present Form. I have made some few Alterations and Additions, which on some Accounts I judged necessary : and now venture to print it, as apprehending it contains an Instance of real Conversion, attended with such Circumstances, which add Confirmation to some of the more important Truths of the Gospel.

The Case and Experience of the Deceased, is herein truly represented ; especially as far as could be expected in so short a Compass, and in a versified Form. I have added a few Notes and Texts of Scripture for Illustration ; by which the Reader may, in some measure, see the Correspondence of this Case with the divine Promises, and the Experience of the Saints recorded in the sacred History.

I have the Pleasure of being intimately acquainted with the worthy Minister, who was the happy Instrument of awakening, and assisting the Faith and Joy of the Deceased ; who is Pastor of the Baptist Church at EYTHORN, near SANDWICH, KENT ; where this young Man attended and joined as a Member.

I entreat

I entreat those who are young in Years to read this ELEGY with Seriousness. Here is an Instance of a Fellow-creature cut off in the Bloom of Life! May this excite such to enquire, whether they are in any measure acquainted with what he experienced, as to the Power of Religion in the Soul. There is no other Way for Sinners to be saved, but that which the Gospel reveals, thro' JESUS CHRIST.—This is the “One Thing needful.”—Those who treat the Things of the SPIRIT of GOD as foolishness, and despise the Power of Religion, while they are resting in the meer Form of it, will sooner or later see their Mistake.

May the LORD grant to every one who reads, or hears the following Lines, a spiritual Discernment of spiritual Things; and own this feeble Attempt, as a Means of promoting his own Glory, and the Good of Souls.

BESSEL'S GREEN, near
SEVENOAKS, KENT:

JOHN STANGER.

January 18th 1774.

An ELE.

A N
E L E G Y

ON THE DEATH &c.

HOW fleeting is the state of mortal man !
His life a dream, his moments but a span.
While every beating pulse and heaving breath,
Still brings him nearer to the vale of death.
This, DRAYSON proves, whose youthful grave can
 shew,
Poor mortals are but frail, their moments few.

Does any ask the cause why death affails
All Adam's race, and over all prevails ?
Sin * mark'd the doleful road : nor can it be
(Since Heav'n has pass'd th' immutable decree)
That any shall escape the tyrant's sting ;
Whose shafts promiscuous wound both slave and king.

* Rom. v. 12.

Two* only ever found a different road,
 As wond'rous proofs, of a more wond'rous God.
 Since then it has been every mortal's fate,
 Tho' summon'd from the most exalted state,
 To make the gloomy grave their dark retreat.

O could we turn the dismal veil aside !

But O! the thought affronts our human pride :
 Nature recoils, shrinks back, nor dares to see,
 Such spectacles as all ere long must be.
 When greatest potentates and princes must,
 Mix with the meaner sort, and moulder into dust.

And is it so? Hath God in justice spoke?

His threats and promises he'll ne'er revoke.
 For dust thou art, proud man, brutish and vain,
 And to thy native dust must turn again.
 This must be, all fulfil'd : but as a prop
 To bear the fainting christian's spirits up ;
 (When nature fails, and ev'ry fault'ring breath
 Groans with th' approaching agonies of death)
 He views his risen Lord, who bled and died,
 And now sits conqu'ror by his Father's side.
 He dares presume, tho' dreary is the road,
 To tread the footsteps which his Saviour trod :

* Enoch and Elijah.

Whose merits such compleat salvation bring,
 That strips the hideous monster of his sting.
 This DRAYSON found, whose faith in Jesus view'd
 The noxious grave, as with red roses strew'd.
 'Twas Sharon's Rose* had so much charm'd his heart,
 Which made the youth desirous to depart.

But stop my muse, and make an humble pause,
 If any can inform, enquire the cause,
 Why MARTIN DRAYSON's in pursuit of heav'n,
 Who but so late to ev'ry vice was giv'n?
 What moral fitness, say, calm reasoner say,
 Or virt'ous qualities to pave the way
 For God to work on, while sin reign'd supreme?
 For sure it is no virtue to blaspheme. †

Not twelve months ‡ since, a hardy stubborn youth
 Nor more than brute approv'd of God and truth;
 But to revile, and turn it to his game:
 A slave to sense and sin, but void of shame.

* Referring to Sol. Song ii. 1. understood of Jesus Christ.

† He was a Blasphemer, having often treated the things of God with contemptuous and impious Language; and join'd with others in reproaching, the more serious and strict Professors of Religion; and even those, whom he afterward esteem'd it his Happiness to be connected with.

‡ It was about the latter End of January, 1773; when he was first impress'd with a Sense of Religion, by means of attending the Meeting at Eythorn; which is refered to in some following Lines.

In sabbath breaking shew'd his vile pursuit,
 (Of every outward vice the common root.)
 When thus engag'd, (Behold th' Almighty power!)
 An hour of sinning proves th' alarming hour.
 When ask'd to attend the preached word of God,
 He cry'd * "'twould please me, for I think 'tis odd
 That such should preach, who have no proper rules,
 'Tis nought but madness, and they all are fools. †
 But yet I'd go, if I myself could trust;
 Forgive me if I do, for laugh I must."

Then to the sacred place with heedless gait,
 He near approach'd; but made a quick retreat.
 At last, with much reluctance did presume,
 Where God's peculiar presence deigns to come:
 Among the humble suppliants took his seat,
 Who came to worship at Immanuel's feet.
 Whose soul no more prepar'd to meet his God,
 Than was the earthen floor on which he trod.
 As the proud horse foams at the glitt'ring spear,
 Defies the ranks, and rushes heedless there:
 So went the thoughtless youth, quite void of grace,
 Or decent reverence due in such a place.

But blest event the master of the feast,
 With kindness fraught, came down to view his guest:

* This is the Substance of what he said to a Companion.
 † 1 Cor. ii. 14.

Whose promise runs, amidst our praise or prayer
 He will himself vouchsafe to meet us there. *
 Thus he whose eye discerns both guile and truth,
 Amidst th' assembly spy'd the guilty youth
 Immers'd in his own blood, by sin defil'd,
 And yet thro' all he view'd him as his child;
 'This wand'ring sheep, who far abroad did roam;
 The Shepherd kindly meets, to bring him home:
 'This prodigal, who long on husks had fed,
 Shall now be brought to taste his Father's bread. †
 The dried bones are view'd, ‡ and bid to move;
 Which proves 'twas Jesu's time, the time of love: §
 Thus He whose word all vital power gives,
 Pass'd by, and lo! the lifeless rebel lives.

And here God's ministers are oft employ'd;
 By which old satan's kingdom is annoy'd:
 But 'tis the mighty agent works within, ||
 When lust is kill'd, or man abhors his sin.—
 Paul preach'd, but 'twas his master's sovereign art,
 To open poor attentive Lydia's heart. ¶
 This Philip knew, when he receiv'd the word
 (Nor heedless took the message from the Lord.)

* Mat. xviii. 20. † Luke xv. 16 &c, ‡ Eze. xxxvii,
 1 &c. § Eze. xvi. 6—8. || St. Paul's Words, 1 Cor. iii. 7.
 certainly intend as much as is here expressed. ¶ Acts xvi. 14.

" Go Philip, to the strangers chariot join,*
 There your attempts I'll crown with pow'r divine.†"
 He hastes away, some queries does premise,
 And in God's hand unfolds the Eunuch's eyes.
 He preached Jesus as the sinner's trust;
 So all God's faithful labourers will and must.
 The cause is still same, the same the plan,
 And ———, not Philip, now must be the man.
 This DRAYSON found beneath the preached word,
 Cloth'd and commission'd by th' eternal Lord.
 His carnal pleasures nothing could controul;
 But now finds a strange terror pain his soul.‡
 Fix'd like a statue, stricken with surprise;
 Nor from the preacher turns his trickling eyes.
 His heart is pierced, and alarm'd his fears,
 Which vend their griefs by showers of pensive tears.§
 God's arrows of conviction forth are sent,
 Which melts the stony heart of adamant. ||
 The fire and hammer ¶ in the Spirit's hand,
 So wound his soul, he can no more withstand.

And now the spirit did the contrast draw,
 Between his heart, and God's all perfect law: **

* Acts viii. 29. † If Philip had no assurance of this, I think the Event proves, it was the LORD's Design.

‡ Acts ii. 37. § Jer. xxxi. 9. Luke vii. 38. || Zech. vii. 12. Eze. xxxvi. 26. ¶ Jer. xxiii. 29. ** Rom. vii. 7—13 Rom. iii. 19,

Hence guilt arises, hence he saw in part
 Sin's dreadful nature, and his just desert;
 That if the Lord should send him quick to hell,
 He must confess that justice would do well.

Now Sinai's thunder's found with dreadful roar,*
 Such as his trembling soul ne'er heard before.
 In vain for duties, † self-deceptive name,
 To sooth the righteous law's tremendous claim.
 This awful denunc'ation now was nigh,
 Know, rebel man, the soul that sins must die. ‡
 That he had sin'd, he needed none to tell;
 And was that wretch, on whom this sentence fell.
 Thus groan'd the stripling, sore with sin oppress; §
 A stranger to his God, and heart-felt rest.
 Death, Hell, and Judgment, now beset him so,
 He knew not what to say, or where to go.

But long this son of sorrow did not groan,
 Ere God vouchsaf'd to hear his pensive moan. ||

* Compare Exo. xix. 16. & xx. 18. Heb. xii. 18—21.
 The moral Law was delivered with Thunders &c. attending it; which strikingly holds forth, the Effect which the Law has on the Mind of a truly awakened Sinner, when he is thereby shewn the evil of Sin, and its dreadful Demerit. Such an one while thus under the Law, without Faith in the Gospel, is alarmed &c. which may not improperly be call'd Sinai's Thunders &c. † Rom. iii. 20. Gal. iii. 10.

‡ Eze. xviii. 20. § Acts ii. 37. ix. 6. xvi. 30. Luke xviii. 13. || This corresponds with many of the divine Promises of Scripture; as Psalm li. 17. cii. 17, 19, 20. lla. lvii. 15. lxvi. 2.

Behold ! the bleeding Lamb * his love reveals,
 And lets him know his pow'r both wounds and heals,
 Jesus the finner's friend, with sweet surprise,
 Points out the way in which his safety lies.

" Come unto me," he cries, " ye weary come, †
 See, heavy laden soul, behold there's room
 In my expanded heart, my friendly breast;
 O come to me, and I will give you rest:
 Rest from God's wrath, which doth your conscience
 seize ;

Rest from law-curses, which you can't appease :
 Rest from the filth, as well as guilt of sin,
 Which in time past, your soul hath wallowed in :
 Rest from your fears of judgment, death and hell :
 This sov'reign balm must suit your conscience well.
 When law condemns, or sin for vengeance cries,
 Look up, and view th' atoning sacrifice :
 I paid the dreadful debt, I set you free, ‡
 And nail'd your black indictment to the tree :
 And now no condemnation shall take place, §
 For my own streaming blood confirms my grace. ||"

* John i. 29. 1 Pet. i. 19.

† This refers to our LORD's gracious Invitation, and Promise, in Mat. xi. 28. a believing Application of which, was the Means of giving him Relief and Comfort in his Soul : and hereby he was led to a joyful Appropriation of JESUS, as his SAVIOUR ; and of the glad Tidings of the Gospel.

‡ Gal. iii. 13. § Rom viii. 1, 34. || 1 John i. 7.

This

This DRAYSON heard by faith, and rais'd his head;
 Like one reviv'd amidst the slumb'ring dead.
 A morn unclouded did succeed his griefs,
 And seed with sorrow sown, brought joyful sheaves.*
 The pleasing subject of the Saviour's grace,
 Fill'd his enlarged soul with songs of praise:
 With solemn joy, he blest the sacred word;
 And found a happy freedom in the Lord. †

And now the soul, where God his pow'r displays,
 Seeks to be found in God's appointed ways: ‡
 His Lord's example in his eye he keeps, §
 Nor thinks it wrong to tread the master's steps.
 Join'd the glad church, whence first his conflicts came; †
 Nor blush'd to own a gracious Saviour's name.
 Here some short time, the stripling took his place;
 A signal proof of God's distinguish'd grace:
 Enjoy'd each favour Jesus doth bestow,
 And flourish'd in the courts of grace below. ||

He having thus a Saviour's cause profess'd,
 Did further prove that grace his soul Possess'd. ¶
 The love of Jesus shed abroad within,
 Constrain'd him ** to avoid the paths of sin.

* Psalm cxxvi. 5, 6. † Rom. viii. 15, 16.

‡ This refers to his being baptised, and joining the Church
 at Eythorn, May 16; 1773. Mat. xxviii. 19. Acts ii. 41.

§ Mat. iii. 13. || Psalm xcii. 13. ¶ Tit. ii. 11, 12.

** 2 Cor. v. 14, 15

By vital union to the living vine, *
 His soul was fruitful, and his works did shine.
 He liv'd by faith, on things to sense unknown; †
 And oft in prayer drew near the heav'nly throne. ‡
 With warm desires, he lov'd with saints t' appear §
 On all appointed means, 'cause God was there.
 While thus in things divine he was employ'd.
 No wonder if the carnal world deride.
 Tho' they reproach'd him, tho' he suffer'd shame, ||
 He joy'd in all, 'cause Jesus bore the same: ¶
 He still resolv'd, his Saviour's footsteps trod; **
 And fruits of grace †† did prove him born of God.

But now a different scene must take its place,
 And glory finish what's begun in grace.
 The youth must drop this earthly house of clay,
 The master calls, nor dares the servant stay.
 He hears the tidings with a calm repose,
 Concluding all is right his Father does :
 Whose chearing visits give him such delight,
 He longs to have his faith exchange'd for sight. ††

* John xv. 5. † 2 Cor. v. 7. ‡ Eph. vi. 18. § Psalm
 lxiii. 1, 2. || He knew what it was to suffer Reproach
 for Religion, but he rejoiced in it (as he expressed himself on
 his Death-bed) and particularly in this view, that he had
 suffered Reproach with those very People, whom he had of-
 ten heretofore reproached himself. ¶ 1 Pet. iv. 13. John xv.
 18, 20. ** John ii. 6. †† Col. i. 6. 1 John iii. 9, 10.
 †† 2 Cor. v. 8. Phil. i. 23.

And

And yet before he takes his last adieu,
 He must to pious friends more fully shew,
 What wond'rous things a gracious God had done
 For his poor soul, * to own him as his son.
 He calls his faithful friend and pastor near,
 To whom his heart-felt joys he does declare.
 " And you, blest instrument in God's great hand, †
 Who point the way to Canaan's peaceful land;
 To you I freely speak, for well you know,
 What trying scenes the Lord hath brought me through.
 Unworthy me; but, O surprising grace!
 Again he smiles, again he shews his face.
 He tells me, all my vileness is forgiv'n,
 My sins are pardon'd, and I'm meet for heav'n. ‡
 I who deserve his fierce vindictive rod,
 Am led by grace to find a pardoning God.
 My faith beheld him in a promise shine;
 His looks were all transporting, all divine.
 O help me to extol the charming name
 Of Jesus, and his wond'rous grace proclaim:
 Whose love is boundless, sovereign and free;
 Or he had never thought on worthless me."

* Psalm lxvi. 16. † Here, and in the following Parts
 of the Elegy, his own Words are nearly imitated.

‡ 2 Cor. i. 22. 2 Cor. v. 1.

As thus the saint advances near his end,
 He still desires the visits of his friend.
 " My friend," he cries, " I've something more to say
 In Jesu's cause, before I launch away.
 Tho' death's dark shadows, o'er my head are drawn,
 The rays of Jesus make a chearing dawn. *
 He has to me some pleasing token giv'n,
 That I ere long shall be with him in heav'n.
 The kingdom is in view, 'tis near at hand;
 From Pisgah's mount, I spy the goodly land. †
 Yet when my joyful spirit is at rest,
 I beg my friend would grant this one request:
 (Unworthy me, I wish for no applause,)
 What I desire, is all in Jesu's cause.
 A solemn text. ‡ I've chose, and beg you'll preach;
 If haply, God the sinner's heart may reach.

Preach

* Psalm xxiii. 4. † Deut. xxiv. 1. As Moses had a View of Canaan from Mount Pisgah, so that remarkable Circumstance is frequently borrowed, to express the Views, which real Christians (while in this World) have of the heavenly Country; of which Canaan was a Type.

‡ The Text refered to, which he chose for the Subject of his Funeral Sermon, was 2 Cor. v. 10, 11. — " For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." — His request herein was duly complied with, before a large and much affected Auditory. He also chose three Hymns to be sung at this Time; viz, Dr. WATTS's Book I. H. 6. Book II. H. 3 & 31. which (considering the
 Mat-

Preach future judgment, most alarming word,
 When sent by the good Spirit of the Lord ;
 And who can tell, if Heaven his blessing send,
 My last farewell may answer some good end.

“ May Ishmael live, ” the pleading patriarch cries ;
 “ May my dear relatives, ” DRAYSON replies :
 (This fervent plea, this sympathetic part,
 Doth more or less strike every christian’s heart.)

Thus pleads the dying youth, with flaming zeal
 For Jesu’s name ; and what he once did feel
 Inspires his inmost soul, nor could forbear
 With strictest charge to shew his pious care.
 He adds, * “ A funeral many flock to see ;
 And who can tell, but some like worthless me,
 May there be met with, Jesus has his day ;
 The means he owns, though in a sov’ reign way.
 My Father, Brother, † O that God would bless
 To them the sacred word, which you express.

Matter of them) further discovers the happy Frame of his
 Soul, when in the immediate Views of Death and Eternity.

* It is worthy of Remark (as was exemplified in the Case
 of this young Man) that the Grace of GOD in the Soul, leads
 to Benevolence and Compassion to fellow Creatures ; respect-
 ing not merely their temporal, but also their spiritual and e-
 ternal Interests.

† He prayed vocally and earnestly the Day before he died,
 that the LORD would shew his Father and Brother, their Sin
 and Danger ; and bring them to CHRIST ; and at last to Glory.

“ Pray tell the young * to seek the Lord betimes,
 Left they grow fear'd, and harden'd in their crimes.
 Tell those who are in satan's kingdom bold,
 That I am young, and they may ne'er be old.
 Death takes his dismal aim among the young,
 And often spares the weak, and takes the strong.
 His dread commission stops at no man's door,
 But seizes high and low, and rich and poor.
 And after that (O thrice heart-rending word !
 O tell them, 'tis th' assertion of the Lord ;
 However thoughtless souls may shun the view)
 Comes certain, solemn, awful judgment too.
 And dreadful will it be for all the dead,
 Who are not found in Christ, the living Head.
 O speak their danger, tell them, trembling I,
 Just launching into vast Eternity,
 Strictly enjoin'd it ; † O may every soul,
 Find some advantage, from the sacred whole.”

“ And you my friends, to whom I'm bound in love ;
 My younger friends, ‡ for whom my bowels move,
 Mark

* He earnestly desired his Minister, to be very particular in his funeral Sermon, in addressing his young Neighbours, with whom he was once intimate, on the Solemnity and Importance of Death and Judgment.

† He was remarkably earnest in pressing these things on his Minister.

‡ This refers to those young People who were Members of the same Church with himself. He said, “ Tell my young friends

Mark what I say : temptations will be strong,
 And oft take sad advantage of the young.
 Keep close to Christ your friend, your sacred head;
 And mind the paths of duty he hath led.
 If Jesus keeps you, you'll securely stand ;
 Nor are you safe but in Jehovah's hand.
 And may you all unite with one accord,
 On earth to serve and praise your glorious Lord.
 'Twill not be long, ere heav'n-born souls shall meet;
 And walk in white, in dear Immanuel's street.
 Where his refulgent glory he displays,
 And every thought is lost in love and praise.
 Life wasteth, death advances, friends adieu,
 Farewel vain world, for heav'n is now in view. "

Thus slept the saint, on Jesu's peaceful breast,
 Whose soul we humbly trust is safe at rest.
 And who can tell, tho' human hopes are weak,
 But DRAYSON's dust and ashes yet may speak.

" Friends, O tell them to keep close to CHRIST, to live in
 " love; praying with and for one another; building one ano-
 " ther up in their most holy Faith; " with other things of
 like Nature.

I hope my young Friends who are here referred to, will
 not fail to preserve an affectionate Remembrance of this sea-
 sonable and solemn Advice, coming from the Lips of a dying
 Brother. It is with Pleasure that I think the Printing of this
 little Piece, will tend to revive these Things on their Minds ;
 and that herein I am performing a Service, which I trust will
 be peculiarly acceptable to them, for whom I have so sin-
 cere and cordial an Esteem.

God's

God's mercy still abounds to Adam's race,
 Yet all he saves, he saves by sovereign grace :
 Seeks no prerequisites in human hearts,
 Prev'ous to that which he himself imparts.
 Nor out of God, can any cause be given,
 Why ought of Adam's race are brought to heaven
 A cogent proof of this in DRAYSON lies,
 Tho' pharisaic boasters dare despise.
 We own the wond'rous pow'r, we bless the grace
 Which shines so bright in this peculiar case.
 May all who hear, observe and mark his path ;
 Who liv'd in filial fear, and dy'd in faith.

And tho' no costly spices to perfume,
 Or sculptur'd marble to adorn his tomb ;
 His humble turf, unnotic'd shall be known,
 When the last loud important trump is blown.
 DRAYSON shall hear, when Jesus speaks the word
 Burst from the grave, and meet his glorious Lord
 With him ascend in triumph thro' the sky,
 And reign with him to all Eternity.

O may our souls in that triumphant day,
 Divested of these cumb'rous clogs of clay ;
 Join the blest company, the ransom'd race ;
 And with loud Hallelujahs, hail all conquering grace

T H E E N D



